

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CANBER 07298 060817Z

43

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01 L-01

PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 DODE-00 /044 W

----- 000705

R 060723Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4448

INFO CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 7298

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AS

SUBJ: U.S. AND JOINT AUSTRALIAN-AMERICAN DEFENSE FACILITIES

AS POLITICAL ISSUES

REF: A) CANBERRA 6314 B) CANBERRA A-156, SEPT 3, 1974

1. SUMMARY: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS SUGGEST THAT FUTURE OF U.S. DEFENSE FACILITIES IN AUSTRALIA MAY PROVE A CONTENTIOUS ISSUE AT BIENNIAL LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE IN EARLY FEBRUARY 1975 DESPITE EARLIER PREDICTIONS TO CONTRARY BY GOA LEADERS. PLATFORM COMMITTEE THAT WILL DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR CONFERENCE INCLUDES INVETERATE CRITICS OF FACILITIES. ANTI-FOREIGN MILITARY BASES GROUP WAS ESTABLISHED IN CANBERRA NOV 3 WITH LABOR MP AS CHAIRMAN. END SUMMARY

2. TWO RECENT DEVELOPMENTS SUGGEST THAT U.S. DEFENSE FACILITIES IN AUSTRALIA MAY BE RETURNING AS POLITICAL ISSUE AFTER PERIOD OF COMPARATIVE QUIESCENCE.

3. ON OCT 24 IN WASHINGTON, DAVID COMBE, FEDERAL SECRETARY OF AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY (ALP), (THEN IN WASHINGTON ON IV GRANT), WARNED DCM THAT U.S. AND JOINT AUSTRALIAN-AMERICAN DEFENSE FACILITIES COULD BE SIGNIFICANT ISSUE AT FORTHCOMING ALP FEDERAL CONFERENCE, FEB 3 - 7 (REF A). COMBE NOTED THAT COMPOSITION OF PLATFORM SUBCOMMITTEE FOR DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS (WHICH

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 CANBER 07298 060817Z

WILL DRAFT THESE PLANKS FOR ENSUING CONFERENCE DEBATE) HAD PRE-

DOMINANTLY LEFTIST COLORATION. COMBE ADDED THAT INFORMED LEFT WING WAS FULLY AWARE THAT PINE GAP AGREEMENT COULD BE TERMINATED ON ONE-YEAR NOTICE AFTER DECEMBER, 1975. COMBE MADE MUCH SAME POINTS TO DEPT ASST SEC GLEYSTEN. COMBE IS POLITICAL MODERATE, WELL-DISPOSED TO U.S. HE HAS HERETOFORE AVOIDED COMMENTS TO US ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES OF THIS KIND.

4. EMBASSY HAS OBTAINED LIST OF DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS PLATFORM SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS: PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM (CONVENOR), SENATOR JOHN WHEELDON (WESTERN AUSTRALIA), MR. J. BENSON (NEW SOUTH WALES TRADE UNION LEADER), DR. R. J. COOKSEY (LECTURER IN POLITICAL SCIENCE AT AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY), AND MR. BART LOURIGAN (SECRETARY OF ALP IN QUEENSLAND). THIS SUB-COMMITTEE AND ELEVEN OTHER PREPARING RESOLUTIONS FOR CONFERENCE WERE ELECTED AT SEPT. 1974 MEETING OF ALP FEDERAL EXECUTIVE.

5. SENATOR WHEELDON IS A LEFT-WING INDIVIDUALIST WHO HAS OPPOSED U.S. DEFENSE FACILITIES IN AUSTRALIA. HE IS CHAIRMAN OF JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE, AND WAS ONLY NEW FACE ELECTED TO PRESENT GOVERNMENT BY ALP CAUCUS. HE IS MINISTER FOR REPATRIATION (VETERANS' AFFAIRS). BENSON IS SECRETARY OF NSW BRANCH OF PRO-COMMUNIST SEAMEN'S UNION OF AUSTRALIA, THOUGH HE IS DESCRIBED BY OUR CONSUL GENERAL IN SYDNEY AS AMONG LESS RADICAL OF FAR LEFTIST FIGURES IN THE STATE. DR. COOKSEY IS ACADEMIC NUT WHO HAS, UNFORTUNATELY, VIRTUALLY MADE A CAREER OUT OF ATTACKING U.S. DEFENSE FACILITIES. HIS PSEUDO-SCIENTIFIC STATEMENTS OFTEN CONTAIN FACTUAL INACCURACIES, BUT THE SUBJECT MATTER IS SUFFICIENTLY COMPLEX THAT HE RETAINS REPUTATION AS A DEFENSE EXPERT. LOURIGAN IS ALP FUNCTIONARY WITHOUT STRONG POSITIONS ON DEFENSE MATTERS. OUR CONSUL IN BRISBANE COMMENTS THAT HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO SUPPORT WHITLAM'S STRONGLY IN PLATFORM SUB-COMMITTEE.

6. FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE COMMITTEE AT PREVIOUS ALP FEDERAL CONFERENCE IN JULY 1973 WAS MORE BALANCED ON U.S. FACILITIES ISSUE. 1973 COMMITTEE WAS COMPOSED OF WHITLAM, SENATOR CAVANAGH (LEFTIST BY REPUTATION BUT VIRTUALLY SILENT ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN RECENT YEARS), MANFRED CROSS (MHR FROM BRISBANE AND WELL-DISPOSED TO U.S.), DR. J.F. CAIRNS (CURRENTLY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, REPUTED LEFTIST, AND LONG-TIME CRITIC OF U.S.), WILLIAM CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 CANBER 07298 060817Z

L. MORRISON (MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND OCCASIONAL CRITIC OF U.S., THOUGH NOT ON BASE FACILITIES), AND LANCE BARNARD (MINISTER FOR DEFENSE AND WELL-DISPOSED TO U.S.).

7. IN VIEW OF COMPOSITION OF PLATFORM SUB-COMMITTEE FOR 1975 CONFERENCE, IT IS VIRTUALLY INEVITABLE THAT PROBLEMS WILL COME UP ALL FEDERAL CONFERENCE. WHITLAM'S PUBLIC POSITION ON FACILITIES WAS LAST STATED IN PARLIAMENT ON APRIL 3, 1974, WHEN HE SA A

EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS WOULD NOT BE EXTENDED OR PROLONGED. HIS OWN PUBLIC POSITION WILL FURTHER COMPLICATE THE EFFORT WE ANTICIPATE HE WILL MAKE TO SIDE-TRACK THE ISSUE, WHICH HE WAS ABLE TO DO WITH GREAT SKILL IN 1973.

8. SECOND DEVELOPMENT IS ESTABLISHMENT IN CANBERRA NOV 3 OF QTE ANTI-FOREIGN MILITARY BASES GROUP END QTE, WITH MR. KEN FRY (ALP MHR FOR ELECTORATE OF FRASER IN CANBERRA) AS CHAIRMAN. FORMATION OF GROUP WAS PRECEDED BY LETTER TO EDITOR OF CANBERRA TIMES BY DR. DESMOND BALL. LETTER STATED THAT PRESENCE OF FOREIGN MILITARY BASES IN AUSTRALIA HAMPERED AUSTRALIA'S EFFORTS TO BUILD INDEPENDENT FOREIGN POLICY AND INVITED NUCLEAR ATTACK. BALL HAS BEEN ANOTHER PROLIFIC CRITIC OF U.S. DEFENSE FACILITIES. HOWEVER, UNLIKE DR. COOKSEY, BALL GENERALLY DOES HIS HOMEWORK AND CAREFULLY ANALYZES EVERY SCRAP OF PUBLICLY-AVAILABLE INFORMATION, DISPLAYING ANALYTICAL TALENT OF A HIGH ORDER. (SAMPLE OF BALL'S WORK WAS SUBMITTED WITH REF B.) MR. KEN FRY IS LOCAL CANBERRA POLITICAL FIGURE WHO ENTERED PARLIAMENT IN MAY, 1974. HE NEEDS NATIONAL EXPOSURE, WHICH DR. BALL WILL BE IN POSITION TO GIVE HIM THROUGH ANTI-FOREIGN MILITARY BASES GROUP.

9. COMMENT. WE DO NOT RPT NOT WANT TO MAKE TOO MUCH OF ALL THIS. THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT SENIOR AUSTRALIAN OFFICIALS (E.G. , WHITLAM, WILLESEE AND TANGE) REASSURED THE AMBASSADOR ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THAT THEY FORESEE NO SERIOUS DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS OVER THESE FACILITIES NEXT YEAR, AND THEY, AS WELL AS DEFENSE MINISTER BARNARD AND HIS ASSISTANT, WILLIAM PRITCHETT, HAVE DOWN-PLAYED POSSIBILITY OF SERIOUS CHALLENGE ON ISSUE BY ALP LEFT WING AT ALP FEDERAL CONFERENCE IN FEB 1975.

10. ON THE OTHER HAND, OUR JOINT FACILITIES ARE BOUND TO BE TARGETS OF THE LEFT. THE ONLY QUESTION IS HOW STRONG
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 CANBER 07298 060817Z

THESE PRESSURES WILL BE AND HOW EFFECTIVELY THEY WILL BE COUNTERED BY PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM AND CERTAIN OTHER LEADERS OF THE ALP.
GREEN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY BASES, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, POLITICAL SITUATION, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974CANBER07298
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740318-0789
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741167/aaaacfdetel
Line Count: 157
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A) CANBERRA 6314 B) CANBERRA A-156,, SEPT 3, 1974
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUL 2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <27 MAR 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: U.S. AND JOINT AUSTRALIAN-AMERICAN DEFENSE FACILITIES AS POLITICAL ISSUES
TAGS: PINT, AS, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005